

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

Karen Orr of Port Waikato loved elocal's July feature edition on Grassroots Rugby. She wishes to publicly highlight some deep concerns about Junior club and school rugby, concerns shared by other local parents.

RUGBY UNION HAS GOT IT WRONG

Remember the days when young children dreamed of playing rugby forever and eventually wearing the black jersey? Well those days are numbered. Due to the regulations enforced by the Rugby Union, children are not getting the opportunities that were once available.

A trend that is starting to show around the country is that when club rugby ends at 13 and school rugby starts, the kids are not getting what they should - the opportunity to be able to play their chosen sport and to be ensured a coach. There are too many kids and not enough coaches. Children are leaving rugby and either changing codes or dropping out all together. We as a country are missing out on some really fantastic talent. Parents put in a lot of commitment driving their kids to practices and games and of course being there to support, but to what end. Children need to be given a fair chance and need to be able to play club rugby all the way through should they wish. The Rugby Union needs to reassess their decision and actually talk to Clubs and Schools not just decisions without consultation.

Now another problem we are facing in the Counties/Manukau district is that the smaller clubs are having trouble with their teams and the Dispensation Committee. While one understands that they have policies and guidelines to follow, these really need to be based on the individual clubs. The smaller clubs who are unable to have an Open and Restricted grade are getting kids playing in grades too heavy (which is dangerous) or kids playing in teams that are not of the same skill level. Due to the unfairness of the dispensations, kids who are in their last year of club rugby are not getting to play in the competition grades because they are playing in teams they shouldn't be. Sport is about having fun, giving it a go but also about improving and how can that be achieved when they are not playing at their own skill level? Again commitment is put in by the parents and the child themselves yet they are rewarded with not having the chance to be all they can be. Yes, at the end of the day these kids just want to be able to play, but let's give them the opportunities that they deserve.



DRIVING TO WINTER WEATHER CONDITIONS

At this time of the year it is prudent to take extra care when we are driving because the road is often wet or even muddy in some places and visibility is reduced. So we won't see hazards as early or be able to stop as quickly. Better to be a few seconds late than dead on time.

There are places where pedestrians cross the road near roundabouts that are not pedestrian crossings. Drivers are not obliged to stop for pedestrians there and nor should they if they then block the flow of other vehicle traffic.

At pedestrian crossings many people walk out in front of vehicles, which are just about to pass through the crossing, forcing the drivers to brake suddenly. If a pedestrian is hit by a car in such a situation the pedestrian is in the wrong.

There are diamonds painted on the road to indicate how far back vehicles should be for it to be safe to cross.

*Kind Regards,
Constable Noel Surrey*

Hair Style by Krystal Quested for the Auckland Fashion Hair Design Competition.



MJ

Hair Design



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